

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 MCT-01 /057 W

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R 131009Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3463

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2176

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ET

SUBJ: RECENT ASSASSINATIONS AND DEATH OF PMAC MEMBER

REF: ADDIS ABABA 1577 (DTG 161549Z MAR 77) AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY: IN PAST FOUR DAYS MEMBER OF PROVISIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE COUCIL (PMAC) KILLED, AND PROMINENT TV PERSONALITY AND PROVISIONAL OFFICE FOR MASS ORGANIZATIONAL AFFAIRS (POMOA) CADRE ASSASSINATED. LARGE PUBLIC RALLY HELD APRIL 11 IN MEMORY OF 2ND LT. NEGUSSIE NEGASSA, PMAC MEMBER IN CHARGE OF MASS ORGANIZATIONAL AFFAIRS WITHIN STANDING COMMITTEE. PMAC SEC GEN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN DELIVERED SPEECHES SAYING NEGUSSIE DEATH AND THOSE OF OTHER "PROGRESSIVES", BUILDING FOUNDATION FOR A "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA." END SUMMARY.

1. APRIL 12 ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED 2ND LT NEGUSSIE NEGASSA, WHO 28 YEARS OLD AT TIME OF DEATH, KILLED IN SUDDEN ATTACK BY UNKNOWN BANDITS APRIL 8, WHILE RETURNING TO ADDIS ABABA FROM GEWANE, WHERE HE HAD DELIVERED MESSAGE FROM PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU TO GENERAL MEETING OF "OPPRESSED" AFARS. (GEWANE LOCATED IN NORTHERN
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HARARGHE PROVINCE APPROXIMATELY 200KMS FROM TFAI, IN TRADITIONALLY AFAR DISSIDENT AREA.) AT MEMORIAL RALLY IN ADDIS, PMAC SEC GEN, CAPT. FIKRE SELASSIE WOGDERESS, READ OBITUARY EULOGIZING NEGUSSIE, HIS CAREER, AND REVOLUTIONARY DEDICATION. PMAC VICE-CHAIRMAN, LTCOL ATNAFU ABATE, ALSO SPOKE, REITERATING, "LIFE OF ONE REVOLUTIONARY WOULD BE EXCHANGED WITH LIQUIDATION OF ONE

THOUSAND ANARCHISTS AND REACTIONARIES." ATNAFU SAID THERE NO FREEDOM WITHOUT SACRIFICE OR VICTORY WITHOUT STRUGGLE AND REVOLUTION WITHOUT DEATH. HE ADDED REVOLUTIONARIES HAVE GREAT BURDEN OF RESPONSIBILITY TO BEAR SACRIFICE AND THEREBY LAY FOUNDATION FOR PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA. HE CONCLUDED "WE WILL ESTABLISH A PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA."

2. APRIL 10 ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED ASSASSINATION OF YONNAS LEMMA, LOCAL TV PERSONALITY. YONNAS BORN INTO FORMER RULING CLASS BUT HAD CHOSEN TO SERVE BROAD MASSES AND HAD TAKEN COURSE AT POLITICAL IDEOLOGY SCHOOL. HE DEVOTED TIME TO SERVING INTERESTS OF WORKING CLASS THROUGH SPECIAL TV PROGRAM. YONNAS SHOT IN BROAD DAYLIGHT WHILE ENTERING HOUSE FOR LUNCH. RELIABLE SOURCE STATED HE WAS ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORTER OF REVOLUTION.

3. APRIL 12 ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED ASSASSINATION OF BEGEMDIR AND SEMIEN PROVINCE POMOA MEMBER, AMBACHEW NEGASH. HE FORMER CHAIRMAN OF STUDENTS UNION OF HARAR TEACHERS TRAINING INSTITUTE. AS TEACHER, AMBACHEW REPORTEDLY USED TO EXPOSE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY STAND OF EPRP, AND HELPED TACHEERS AND STUDENTS REMAIN VIGILANT.

4. COMMENT: IT APPEARS DEATH OF PMAC MEMBER MAY IN FACT HAVE BEEN ATTACK BY "BANDITS" AND NOT POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, EVEN THOUGH THERE SPECULATION AFAR LIBERATION MOVEMENT RESPONSIBLE. THERE HAD BEEN SOME BANDITRY ALONG SAME ROAD RECENTLY. HOWEVER, DEATHS OF YONNAS CONFIDENTIAL

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AND AMBACHEW PROBABLY POLITICALLY MOTIVATED AND DEMONSTRATION OF CONTINUING CAPABILITY OF ANTI-EPMG GROUPS TO ASSASSINATE PRO-EPMG OFFICIALS. REFERENCE IN ATNAFU SPEECH TO "PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC" PROBABLY PREMATURE IF REFERENCE WAS INTENDED TO MEAN A RETURN TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT, OR IT MAY HAVE BEEN SIMPLY EXERCISE OF MARXIST JARGON BY ATNAFU WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR THOUGHT ABOUT IMPLICATIONS. IF THE FORMER, IT COULD REPRESENT AN ATTEMPT TO FORESTALL REPORTED PRESSURE FROM POLITBURO TO GRANT MORE AUTHORITY TO CIVILIANS AT FASTER PACE AND TO PREEMPT EPRP RHETORIC. TIENKEN

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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